

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DPW-01 IO-13 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00 AGR-20

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 TRSE-00 AID-20

RSR-01 /147 W

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R 180340Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4742

USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 12923

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, VS

SUBJECT: CORPS CO DIRECTS CRITICAL REMARKS AT SUBORDINATES

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM AMCONSUL CAN THO 16 JUL 73
REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0577

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS MILI, VS

SUBJECT: CORPS CO DIRECTS CRITICAL REMARKS AT SUBORDINATES

1. SUMMARY: CORPS COMMANDER MGEN NGUYEN VINH NGHI
USED HIS JULY 12 MONTHLY TAOR MEETING WITH PROVINCE
CHIEFS AND DIVISION COMMANDERS TO LEVY HARSH CRITICISMS
ON CERTAIN PROVINCE CHIEFS AND TO URGE DELTA-WIDE
IMPROVEMENT WITH MORE URGENCY AND SPECIFICITY THAN IN
THE PAST. NGHI'S TARGETS INCLUDED CORRUPTION, TROOP
MALDEPLOYMENT, HES INFLATION, AND ILLEGAL RICE MOVE-
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MENT. NGHI ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT SAIGON WILL SOON PUB-

LICIZE MANY GOVERNMENTS REFORMS, AND THAT IMPLEMENTATION WOULD INVOLVE SENDING CIVIL SERVANTS TO SAIGON IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER FOR SPECIALIZED TRAINING. INDIVIDUAL POINTS OF CRITICISM FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

2. CORRUPTION. MGEN NGHI TOLD HIS LISTENERS HE HEARS REPORTS OF THE BUYING AND SELLING OF TERRITORIAL FORCE COMMAND AND ENLISTED POSITIONS. HE SAID HE WOULD HOLD THE PROVINCE CHIEF RESPONSIBLE IF FURTHER CASES COME TO LIGHT. NGHI TOLD THE BAC LIEU PROVINCE CHIEF THAT HIS TAX COLLECTORS ARE CORRUPT. THEY COLLECT MORE THAN THEY REPORT AND THE PEOPLE COMPLAIN. NGHI STATED THAT SOME BAC LIEU RF BATTALIONS, TOO, COLLECT TAXES ILLEGALLY IN THEIR AREAS. NGHI ADDED THAT VC TAX COLLECTION COVERS ALL STRATA OF BAC LIEU SOCIETY. FINALLY, NGHI TOLD THE AN XUYEN PROVINCE CHIEF TO STOP CORRUPTION AMONG HIS ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFS AND SERVICE CHIEFS.

3. TROOP MALDEPLOYMENT. SPEAKING PARTICULARLY TO THE PROVINCE CHIEFS OF KIEN HOA, VINH LONG, KIEN GIANG, PHONG DINH, AND AN XUYEN, NGHI CALLED FOR A REORGANIZATION OF TERRITORIAL FORCES TO BETTER PROTECT THE VILLAGES AND HAMLETS. NGHI SAID THAT TERRITORIAL TROOPS DO NOT GET OUT ENOUGH. HE SAID IT WAS INEXCUSABLE THAT THREE TO FIVE VC ARE ABLE TO SURROUND AN OUTPOST. HE SAW NO REASON WHY OUTPOSTS COULD NOT MAINTAIN SECURITY IN AN AREA UP TO ONE KILOMETER ON ALL SIDES. THAT MEANT PATROLS BOTH DAY AND NIGHT. NGHI SAID HE CONSTANTLY HEARS OF ENEMY ATTACKS ON OUTPOSTS BUT RARELY OF PURSUIT OF THE ATTACKERS. PROVINCE-WIDE, SAID NGHI, SECTOR COMMANDERS MUST ORGANIZE MOBILE OPERATION FORCES. THESE UNITS WILL STAY UNDER THE PROVINCE CHIEFS' DIRECT CONTROL, AND WILL CHANGE OPERATIONAL AREAS AT LEAST EVERY THREE DAYS, ADDITIONALLY, DIVISION COMMANDERS MUST ORGANIZE TWO DONG KHOI (COMBINED) OPERATIONS PER WEEK IN JULY. LASTLY, NGHI TOLD PROVINCE CHIEFS TO INCREASE PRESENT-FOR-DUTY STRENGTHS OF RF UNITS AND TO BRING OUTPOST PERSONNEL TO AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL (UNDOUBTEDLY AN INDIRECT SWIPE AT THE GHOST SOLDIER PROBLEM).

4. NGHI WAS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL OF THE AN XUYEN PROVINCE
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CHIEFS'S MISUSE OF FORCES. HE CHARGED THAT THINGS HAVE GOTTEN WORSE IN AN XUYEN, THAT THE PROVINCE CHIEF WAS NOT WELL INFORMED ON HIS SECURITY SITUATION, THAT THE VC ARE COLLECTING TAXES WITH NO OBSTRUCTION BY AN XUYEN TERRITORIAL FORCES, AND THAT MANY PEOPLE ARE MOVING TO VC-CONTROLLED AREAS BECAUSE SECURITY IS BETTER AND THEY RECEIVE BETTER TREATMENT.

5. HES INFLATION. NGHI SAID THAT, EVEN THOUGH SOME HES RATINGS WENT DOWN IN MAY SOME FIGURES FOR THAT MONTH ARE STILL INFLATED. HE SAID THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS IN A AND B HAMLETS IN MAY AND JUNE CAST DOUBT ON THE VALIDITY OF THEIR RATINGS. NGHI ASKED HOW IT HAPPENED THAT THE VC/NVA INFILTRATED 242 A AND B HAMLETS SO FAR IN 1973. (COMMENT: NGHI HAS BEEN COMPLAINING OF HES INACCURACIES FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. END COMMENT).

6. ILLEGAL RICE MOVEMENT. NGHI ORDERED THE CHAU DOC, KIEN PHONG, AND KIEN TUONG PROVINCE CHIEFS TO INVESTIGATE THE SELLING OF VIETNAMESE RICE IN CAMBODIA. TO THE KIEN PHONG PROVINCE CHIEF NGHI SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS AT KIEN PHONG BORDER OUTPOSTS ARE SELLING 100 POUND BAGS OF RICE ACROSS THE BORDER AT 20-25,000\$VN PER BAG.

7. PROVINCIAL COUNCIL CHAIRMEN. THE CHAIRMEN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS ALSO ATTENDED THE MEETINGS, BUT SAT IN THE BACK ROW. THEY WERE INVITED TO EXPRESS ANY PARTICULAR CONCERNS AND THREE MADE STATEMENTS. NGHI TOLD THE CONGEN THAT PROVINCIAL COUNCIL CHAIRMEN ATTEND THESE MEETINGS EVERY THREE MONTHS.

8. COMMENT. MGEN NGHI CAME DOWN HARDER ON HIS SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS JULY 12 THAN HE HAS IN PREVIOUS TAOR MEETINGS. HIS REMARKS ECHOED THOSE OF PRESIDENT THIEU IN HIS JULY SPEECH TO THE NATION. SOME OF NGHI'S POINTS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY GENUINE CONCERN OVER AREAS OF PARTICULAR DETERIORATION, E.G. THE SECURITY SITUATION IN AN XUYEN. IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT NGHI HAS NOT BEFORE SPENT THIS MUCH TIME DENOUNCING CORRUPTION NOR HAS HE COME THIS CLOSE TO NAMING SPECIFIC PRACTITIONERS. FROM NGHI'S POINT
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON12923
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS MARTIN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730725/aaaaasms.tel
Line Count: 150
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <28-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CORPS CO DIRECTS CRITICAL REMARKS AT SUBORDINATES THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM AMCONSUL CAN THO 16 JUL 73
TAGS: MILI, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005